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IT'S GONNA END
ANY MINUTE NOW--
AND WE CAN'T DO
ANYTHING ABOUT IT!

MY POWERS DON'T
WORK HERE IN NANDA
PARBAH!—I CAN'T EVEN
CRASH THROUGH THIS
WALL, LET ALONE TAKE
OVER SOMEONE'S
BODY!

WASHU'S LOCKED
INSIDE THAT TEMPLE
WITH RAMA KUSHNA,
PLAYING BELLAROP FOR
A CROP--AND SENSEI'S
READY TO USE THOSE
PSY-BLASTERS OF HIS
TO BLOW THEM BOTH
AWAY!

DAWNYIT, LOOMIS--
SAY SOMETHING!

WHAT'S
TO SAY,
BRAND?
IT'S OVER.

NO, MR.
LOOMIS...

CIRCLE OF FIRE

Andrew Helfer
STORY
José Luis García-López
ART
John Costanza
LETTERS
Tom Lillio
COLORS
Richard Bruning
EDITING



... IT IS
NOT
OVER



IT CAN
NEVER BE
OVER--



--NOT
FOR
ME.



LEWIS!! I DON'T KNOW
WHY YOU WERE BEARD
ENOUGH TO JUST WALK
ON IN HERE, BUT NOW
THAT YOU ARE, I'M
GONNA--

HEY--HEY!
BOSTON--YOU GONE
TOTALLY GORE
OR WHAT?



HE'S NOT YOUR MAN!
HE'S A PRISONER--
LIKE US!

YES.. I REMEMBER
NOW INSIDE HIM...
A SPIRIT... A
DEADMAN...
LIKE ME...



HIS NAME IS
JONAH

YES, I KNOW A
BIT ABOUT HIM. THERE HAVE
BEEN MOMENTS OF CLARITY
OVER THE YEARS--MOMENTS
IN WHICH I COULD THINK
AND REFLECT ON MY
PAST.



LISTEN TO ME,
DEADMAN. THIS SPIRIT--
THIS JONAH--HE IS
RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL I
HAVE DONE. HE USED MY
BODY, SUPPRESSED MY
SOUL.

PERHAPS I WAS
EVIL BEFORE, BUT
THERE ARE LEVELS
OF EVEN THAT



HE HAS AWAKED ME FOR A
REASON NOW, DEADMAN--AND
WHEN HE HAS ACHIEVED HIS GOAL
HERE, MY "DARKNESS" SHALL
BEGIN AWAK.

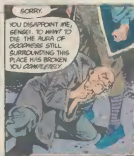
TO HIM, I AM LIKE A GARDEN--
SOMETHING TO BE MOVED AND
DISCARDED WHEN ITS USE-
FULNESS HAS RUN ITS COURSE



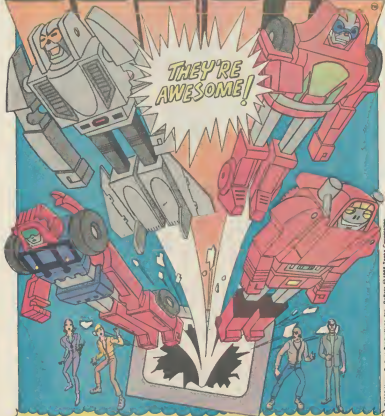
IT WILL HAPPEN SOON, I KNOW.
HE IS DRAINING MY LIFE,
PUSHING MY BODY BEYOND
ITS LIMITS. UNLESS HE
IS DESTROYED--!

MR. LOOKING TOLD ME YOU
WERE THE CHOSEN OF
YOUR GOD. BORN AGAIN--
YOU MUST HAVE THE
POWER WITHIN YOU--





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KILL THEM,
OF COURSE

BUT FIRST
--YOU.

HE IS MAD, RAMA!
WHAT IS HIS
PURPOSE?

HE KNOWS A TRUTH, FAITHFUL
VRISHNU-- THAT THE GIFT
BOTH HE AND BOSCHON BRING
POSSESSES CANNOT BE
RESCINDED, EVEN IF I
CEASE TO EXIST

ONLY HERE IN
NANDAN PRASAT DOES
THE ETHEREAL TAKE
SUBSTANCE-- IF JONAH
IS TO DESTROY DEATHMAN,
HE MUST DO IT SOON--
BEFORE BOSCHON
REVERTS TO HIS
SPIRIT FORM.

REVERT? BUT THAT CAN ONLY OCCUR
IF BOSCHON LEAVES NANDAN PRASAT,
OR IF NANDAN PRASAT ITSELF WAS TO
BE DESTROYED-- YOU CANNOT MEAN--

YES IT IS INEVITABLE I HAVE
FAILED IN A GREAT MANY
THINGS, VRISHNU I HAVE
ATTEMPTED TO BALANCE
THE GOOD-- AND HAVE
LOST A CENTURY'S
COMBINED EVILS INTO
THE WORLD

NOW I WISH
ONLY TO UNDO
THE EVIL I HAVE
PERPETRATED.
IT IS FALLING
APART GO
QUICKLY, VRISHNU--

ALREADY THE
POWER OF JONAH'S
MACHINES BEGINS
TO MOUNT...

ALREADY I
CAN FEEL MY
ENERGIES
FADE...

HEAR ME NOW, FAITHFUL VRISHNU THERE
IS BUT ONE WAY THAT I MAY YET REDEEM MY
SELF BEFORE THE EYES OF THOSE GREATER
THAN EVEN I--

-- ONE WAY THAT I MAY SET
THE STAGE FOR MY CAUSE TO
CONTINUE AFTER I AM GONE.

FOR YOU, IT WILL MEAN
A FINAL SACRIFICE. BUT
THE PLAN MUST BE SET IN
ACTION NOW. WILL YOU
DO THIS THING FOR ME,
FAITHFUL ONE?

YES.







**THE BODY
FLIPS
UP!**

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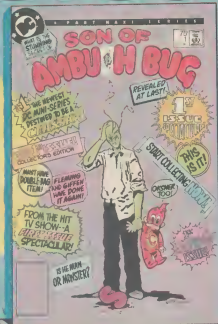
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DEMANDED
AN ENCORE...



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and his friend.



I-I'M
SHOT!

DOORS SLAMMED
SHUT BEHIND ME.
GUESS RAMA STILL
HAS A FEW TRICKS
UP HIS SLEEVE.

BETTER
HAVE A FEW
MORE! ELSE
I'M OUT OF
THIS ONE.



...I'VE NEVER BEEN THIS
FAR INSIDE THIS
PLACE. RAMA
LOSTA ALWAYS
MEET ME
ANYWAY!

RAMA'S TOO FAR
CAN'T GO ANY
FURTHER... BUT I
GUESS THERE'S NO PLACE
ELSE TO... I AM!
GO...

RAMA...?
YOU S-SHALL
THERE?



I KNOW JO-JONAH'S MEN FIRED
THEIR PSI-GUNS B-BACK THERE
WHEN... AMM! THEY KILLED WINK!
I SAW THE SHOT BEGIN TO
FALL.

Y-YOU CALLED ME,
THOUGH. YOU'RE... AMM!
ALWAYS CALLIN' ME
I DON'T KNOW WHY.
S-SEEMS I--I ONLY
B-BEEN TROUBLE
T-TA YOU.



NO BOWEN. NOT
TROUBLE. IT IS THAT
VERY TRUTH THAT
OVERBORNS SOME
OF MACHINERANCE
THAT I MOST
ADMIRER IN YOU.

YOU HAVE ALWAYS BEEN
SPECIAL TO ME, BOWEN...
OF ALL THOSE WHO WERE
MY SLAVES, ONLY YOU
HAD BOTH THE DESIRE
AND THE POWER TO SERVE.



I HAVE ALWAYS
FEEL THE POWER OF
JONAH'S MACHINERY...
A NEW KIND OF MANY
POWERS, BY VERY
ESSENCE... BUT I AM
REMAINED TO MY
FATE.

YOU MUST
CHARGE ON MY MACHINERY
NOW, BOWEN. YOU MUST
CHARGE ON MY BATTLE ON
THE PHYSICAL PLANE.



IF ALL GOES AS I HAVE PLANNED,
YOU WILL REMAIN HERE AFTER I
HAVE GONE. STRIVE TO RIGHT
THE WRONGS I HAVE UNWITTINGLY
UNLEASHED. SEEK OUT THOSE
WHOSE EVIL I HAD HELD IN
CHECK THESE MANY YEARS.



AND BOWEN. PROTECT THE CHILDREN.
THEY ARE MY LEGACY. THEY ARE MY
DREAMS REINCARNATED WITHIN EACH
OF THEM. RESTS A POWERFUL MYSTIC
THAT IS A PART OF ME.

PLEASE,
BOWEN...

I--I THINK IT'S
UN... TOO LATE FOR
THAT NOW, RAMA...



I-I'M
F-FADING
FAST...

THINK I'M
LOST! BOWEN
HAVE TO
CALL IN SOON
FOR THAT
LAST JOB...

NO, BOSTON. THOUGH
I CANNOT TOUCH YOU,
I CANNOT ABANDON YOU. SINCE
ALL PHYSICAL FORMS ARE
BEYOND MY GRASP--
YOU CAN COME TO ME

COME, BOSTON. PASS
THROUGH THE CIRCLE OF
FIRE--BEFORE THE LIFE
FORCE WITHIN YOU
SEEPS AWAY.

LARGESH!
WH-WHAT
EVER YOU
S-SAY...
RAYNA

D-DON'T
KNOW WH-WHAT
YOU'RE PLANNIN'.

... BUT
I GUESS
I-W-WON'T
BE NEEDIN'
A REF.

OH, JEEZ
I'M FALLING!

WHAT EDGE DID
YOU EXPECT,
BOSTON, YOU
BUBO?

BUT MY
SHACKLES--
THEY JUST FELL
THROUGH ME!

I-I'M
SLOWING
DOWN--
FLOATING
ON THE AIR!

MY WOUNDS
ARE GONE!

I'M
DEAD
AGAIN!

HA HA HA!
I KNOW IT SOUNDS
CREEPY, RAYNA--
BUT I'VE NEVER FELT
BETTER! WHAT IS
THIS PLACE?

HERE IS THE LAST
REPOSE OF MY POWERS,
BOSTON BABY. THIS IS THE
PLACE DEEP BELOW THE
EARTH'S SURFACE, THAT I FIRST
EMERGED ONTO THE PHYSICAL
PLANE.

THIS IS MY ABODE, BOSTON.
AND WITH YOUR HELP, I WILL
BE THE SPARK FOR MY
FINAL BATTLE.



CURSE ME FOR A FOOL! I SHOULD HAVE KILLED HIM AND BEEN DONE WITH IT! BUT NO... A FLICKER OF THE ABSENT: A SYMBOLIC DEATH SCENE. NOW ~~BEFORE~~ HE I WOULD HAVE GAINED BEFORE MY MEN



BUT NOW THAT HE'S SHUT IN THERE WITH RAMA, I CAN'T BE SURE IF HE'S DEAD AND YET. I CAN'T DESTROY RAMA UNTIL I AM CERTAIN HE IS

TEMPERATURE IS DROPPING, SNOWFALL IS INCREASING. RAMA'S BREATHING FAST



TIME IS RUNNING OUT! I'VE GOT TO PREVENT ISRAEL FROM BECOMING A SMITH AGAIN-- AND SINCE MY MEN SEEM TO BE IN A STATE OF SHOCK

--I'VE GOT TO DO IT MYSELF!



OPEN IT YOU FOOLS-- NOW!



Y-YES, SIR... ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT TO--



WHAT CHANCE DO I HAVE? TO RELY ON YOU? HAH!

JUST STAND READY-- KEEP YOUR EYES ON SENSE! AND THE MIDGET...



I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE REST...

DRAWN! I AM NOT PICKING UP ANYTHING ON THE ABSENT TRACKER-- WHERE IS HE?



CAN IT BE? IS HE TRULY FINISHED? PERHAPS...

BUT RAMA'S WARS ARE INEVITABLE I KNOW THAT ALL TOO WELL...

I MUST BE SURE AND TO DO THAT



--I MUST ENTER THE ABSENCE OF THE ABSENT!

THE CIRCLE OF FIRE! THIS IS WHERE IT ENDS!

SHOW YOURSELF, RAMA! CONFRONT--

...YOUR DESTINY!

WHY, JONAH? YOU HAVE WHAT YOU WANTED FOR-- THE PEOPLE OF NARADA PROBABLY ARE YOURS! WHY DO YOU NOT SIMPLY LEAVE NOW?

IT'S MORE THAN THAT... AND YOU KNOW IT!

I WANTED ONLY PEACE FROM YOU CHILD, RAMA-- AN END TO MY SERVICE-- NOTHING MORE! BUT YOU WOULD NOT GIVE ME EVEN THAT!

I COULD NOT! YOU WERE THE FIRST WHOSE SPIRIT I HAD REMEMBERED WITHIN! I DID NOT KNOW THE LIMITS OF MY POWER, DID NOT THINK THE ACT WAS IRREVERSIBLE! IF I DID--

IT DOESN'T MATTER NOW! I'VE DISCOVERED A NEW REASON TO EXIST! POWER!-- IT'S BETTER THAN ETERNAL REST!

BUT IF I LET YOU SURVIVE, I KNOW YOU'LL GRAB ANOTHER ONE LIKE BEHND TO TRY AND STOP ME!

YOU HAVE ARE WHAT I AM, GUNS ARE THE POWER-- AND I'M GOING TO MAKE SURE I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO WILL EVER HAVE IT!

TELL ME WHERE HE IS, RAMA--

TELL ME, OR--





JEEZ.

THE WHOLE
PLACE IS COMIN'
DOWN!

LOW WHADDYA
THINK IT MEANS?

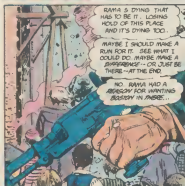
DON'T
KNOW, BUT
THIS ISN'T
THE WAY
HE SAID
IT WOULD
TURN OUT.

SOMETHIN'S
GONE BAD IN
THERE... BUT
I AIN'T GOING
IN TO FIND
OUT WHY!

YEAH, THEY'RE
SURE SCARED ALL
RIGHT. ALL EXCEPT
SENSE!

COLDER IT GETS,
MORE HE LOOKS
LIKE THE GUY I
ALWAYS THOUGHT
HE'D BE...

... A
KILLER.



RAMA'S DYING THAT
HAS TO BE IT. LOSING
HOLD OF THIS PLACE
AND IT'S DYING TOO.

MAYBE I SHOULD MAKE A
RUN FOR IT. SEE WHAT I
COULD DO. MAYBE MAKE A
DIFFERENCE-- OR JUST BE
THERE--AT THE END.

NO. RAMA HAD A
REASON FOR WANTING
BOSCH IN THERE...

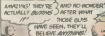


SO I'VE GOTTA BELIEVE
THERE'S A REASON WHY
I'M OUT HERE...

...YEAH.







Continued on 3rd Page Following

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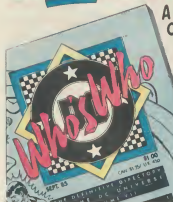
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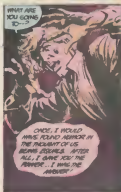
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THERE IS NO SOUND

THERE IS
NO FURY

EQUAL YET OPPOSITE FORCES
DO NOT COLLIDE

...THEY
MERGE...

...THEY CANCEL
EACH OTHER OUT

...THEY
BALANCE...



AND IN SO DOING,
EACH LEAVES
BEHIND THEIR
CRIMINAL
LEGACIES

...THEIR
SHATTERED
DREAMS...

...THEIR FAITHFUL
FOLLOWERS...

THIS MUST BE IT --
WHAT RAMA WAS TALKING
ABOUT! THE TEMPLE'S
SUCKING ITSELF UP--
EVERYTHING'S GETTING
PULLED INTO IT
LIKE...LIKE...

...LIKE IT
HAD NO
RESISTANCE
TO STAND
ANYMORE...







LOOKS LIKE SARNAK
CONVINCED THEM ALL
RIGHT--

--THEY'RE LAYING
ENOUGH ANGERDOWN
AND THE TEMPLE IS
DYING IT!



WASTE OF TIME,
IT SEEMS LIKE,
THOUGH--



--SHE'S BOMB
DOWN ALL BY
HERSELF--





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MEANWHILE

Dear Dick,

I want to take this opportunity to apologize to you and all the great people at D.C. and to your loyal readers. For nineteen years of my life I was one of those ignorant people who believed that comics were for children or children or people who were too immature or stupid to read a real book. Then I fell in love with a man who I believed was one of the most intelligent people on earth and who reads more books than anyone I've ever met and surprise surprise he has a comic book collection. At first I kidded him nonstop about how infantile I thought it was and I couldn't understand how an intelligent human being could lower himself to read such trash. He was extremely patient with me and finally persuaded me to read some comics he knew would spark my interest. Now I'm hooked, I practically die from month to month wondering what will happen next in **CRISIS ON INFINITE EARTHS** and I consider myself a personal friend of the Blue Devil. I want to thank you for the **WHO'S WHO** series, it sure makes nineteen years of catching up much easier. I'm sorry it took me until D.C.'s 50th anniversary year to discover the excitement of comics, but you can bet I'll still be a loyal reader come the 100th anniversary.

Heather A. Campbell
SCOTLAND, Ontario
CANADA
NOE 1R0

No apologies necessary, Heather. We are always delighted to receive letters from recent converts. You see, most of us in the comics industry work on the kind of material that we would

enjoy as readers and hope that the people who comprise our audience share our feelings about that material. I don't know of anyone who, when at his or her drawing board or typewriter, thinks consciously of sending his creative sights at a literacy level lower than his or her own. We're adults who work daily creating stories that utilize elements of heroic fantasy that are aimed, hopefully, at other adults (of all ages!).

Welcome aboard and enjoy!

.....

Dear Mr. Giordano,

You asked for readers' responses to the **Meanwhile** column for the week of November 28th, concerning "censorship," and I am more than happy to oblige.

I may not be a high-end-mighty comic book publisher, but I can easily tell the difference between the concepts of good and bad. Peddling pre-marital sex, swear-words, and bare breasts to impressionable children is bad. Read a Bible and learn for yourself.

Am I mistaken, or do you honestly believe that if a work of literature doesn't have any of these three things, it automatically becomes pep? Come on! Even a liberal (which I now take you to be) can't possibly be that naive. But then again...

Also, parents have a right to know what their children are involved in, and if you refuse to tell the public the difference between Superman and Underground comic (if there is one by the time you're done), then I'm bound and determined to do it myself.

I'd like to conclude this letter with an appropriate quote from the Bible:

Whoever guesses one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened round his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea."

Sincerely,

Larry King

Bridge St. Box 1890
Montreal, VT 05661

PS I loved the closing scene of **WONDER WOMAN** #329. Whatever else I may be, I'm not a prude.

I'm not a high-end-mighty comic book publisher either. And the opinions expressed in my **Meanwhile** column are mine, not our publisher's. My opinion was (and is) that a rating system, per se, would not accomplish the ends of informing the public or concerned parents as to the contents of individual comic magazines. It was not my opinion that we, as an industry, shouldn't try to find a way to accomplish that desired end. I'm afraid, though, that I'm not was enough to create a system that would satisfy everyone or anyone. Using your letter as a guide, I think I could create a system of labeling that would satisfy you, but I don't think you're typical. (I really don't think anyone is typical.) That's where the problems start. Surely you know that everyone doesn't view the world (and comics) as you do. What is a "swear word" to you may not be to your neighbor, some people don't think bare breasts are necessarily bad, many don't share the belief that we "peddle" it, even though an argument can be made that comics depict violence on occasion, and why is that a better or more common human experience than making love? You see, Mr. King, I don't have the answers. And neither do you. You have answers that satisfy you and I have answers that satisfy me and neither of our sets of answers satisfies everyone else. You may be satisfied that your wisdom should prevail, but I'm afraid that I consider myself an ordinary human being, suffering all the frailties that status implies, and therefore not qualified to speak for my fellow.

The only rating that works is caution. This magazine may offend someone.

Paraphrasing, most of my associates think of me as being conservative. I disagree. I see myself as a moderate, while you "know" me to be a liberal. See how well labels work?

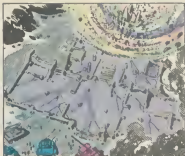
Thank You and Good Afternoon

Dick

D C
ON SALE THE
CHECK
WEEK OF MARCH 27
LIST

- ☐ **Tales of the Legion 336:** The founders take care of old business!
- ☐ **Action 580:** Superman suffers remorse when he fails to save a group of people!
- ☐ **Detective 563:** A prequel to the return of Two-Face, plus Green Arrow!
- ☐ **All-Star Squadron 58:** The coming of Mekaniquel!
- ☐ **V# 17:** A special two-part flashback starring Elias!

- ☐ **Deadman 4:** In the conclusion, it's Deadman vs. Sensei to the death!
- ☐ **DC Challenge 8:** Mongoose vs. New Gods on the Moon! Outsiders to the rescue!
- ☐ **Shadow 2:** Why is the Shadow out to kill the real Lonestar Crockett?
- ☐ **Lords of the Ultra-Realm 1:** A 6-part mini-series as the Earth is caught in a contest between good and evil!





MR. LOOMIS!
THE MEN--
THEY GO!

GO!



HEY!

WAIT A
MINUTE!



YOU CAN'T
JUST LEAVE
US HERE! WE'LL
FREEZE!

THE KIDS--
THEY'LL
DIE!



THAT, MR. LOOMIS, IS
NEARLY CONCERN. I HAVE
CONSIDERED SHORTLY, THE
MOVINGCRAFT WILL ARRIVE
ON THE FAR SIDE OF THIS
MOUNTAIN RANGE, TO
TAKE MY MEN AND MYSELF
BACK TO OUR HEAD-
QUARTERS.

THERE WILL
BE NO ROOM
ABOARD, I FEAR,
FOR YOU AND YOUR
CHILDREN OF THE
DAMNED.



YOU--YOU'RE
NO BETTER
THAN--

NO-- YOU ARE ANIMALS,
MR. LOOMIS, JONAH WOULD
HAVE ANSWERED YOU BY NOW. I OFFER
YOU AN OPTION: DIE NOW-- OR
LATER.



NONE OF THIS
WAS MY DOING, LOOMIS...
I WOULD NOT HAVE
THOUGHT TO SCATTER
THE DENIZERS OF HUMAN
PAIN AND GRIEF ACROSS THE GLOBE.

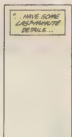
BUT NOW THAT THEY HAVE BEEN
SCATTERED, YOU'LL EXCUSE ME...
I HAVE A BUSINESS TO RUN.



AND YOU...



I SUSPECT THAT
YOU DO...



... HAVE SOME
LAST-MINUTE
DETAILS...



... TO ATTEND
TO...



SO LONG,
WASH...



... WASH I
COULD SAY IT
WAS AWAY
WHILE IT
LASTED...



... BUT IT'S ONLY A MATTER
OF TIME BEFORE HE JOIN
YOU-- AND MAYBE RAYNA
AND BOSEN TOO...



WHAP WHAP WHAP WHAP

LOOK! A
BIRD FROM
THE SKY!





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Well, that's it. It was a long, hard road that brings us all to this point, and frankly, even **WE'RE** a little surprised we made it. But unless you're just getting aboard the **DEADMAN** bandwagon now (and shame on you if you haven't already read issues 1-5) you can see the rather significant changes this mini-series has lapped upon our favorite dead hero. The heretofore everpresent Rama Kushna is gone. As is Boston Brand's brother Cleveland. Likewise for Vashua. In their place is a new cause, a new meaning for **DEADMAN**'s life (?) -- the pursuit and capture of the hundreds of mercilessly evil human beings who once inhabited the mystical village of Nanda Parbat. He's got his work cut out for him -- no question. He may have help, he may do it alone -- or he may not do it at all. That, as they say, dear reader, is entirely up to **YOU**.

If you liked the mini-series you've just read, let us know. Jose and I and Richard and Tom and John all liked it -- but even if we line up in front of Dick Giordano's office and, with tears welling up in our eyes, **BEG** to do more **DEADMAN** stories -- it ain't gonna happen. He can be a hard man, that Dick Giordano (he can also be a real sweetheart, but that isn't going to help me make my point, so forget I mentioned it). If you've enjoyed this series **HALF** as much as we have, you'll write letters -- billions of 'em -- and send them off to us as soon as humanly possible. They're always good to read, and they're always appreciated, but they're **MORE** than that right now, they're **AMMUNITION**, they're **FUEL**, they're the things we can dump out of large burlap bags onto Dick Giordano's desk, while we're selling him **ORDERING** him -- to let us do another series. And if we have enough -- he will.

It's really that simple. No one here is **AGAINST** the idea of doing more **DEADMAN** series -- quite the contrary -- but we **DO** need to know that there's an audience for this type of material out there. As I said in my first letter column for this mini-series, people tend to not write letters to mini-series which tend to not have the lead time to publish them. So feedback is usually limited, and this can sometimes be perceived as apathy towards the book on the part of the readers. We hope this isn't so. We hope you've enjoyed the **DEADMAN** mini-series we've just completed -- and we hope you'll take the time to let us know.

Now that I've gotten that out of the way, we can deal with something I promised way back in the first **DEADMAN** letter column, a listing of Boston Brand's appearances in other magazines over the past decade and-a-half, with special

attention paid to those appearances that still remain relevant (I always shy away from the words "really happened" when dealing with comic book continuity) in light of the changes wrought on the character in this mini-series.

First off, you'll notice there's no comprehensive checklist following this rather lengthy explanation, that's partly because, though unknown to me as I wrote the first mini-series lettercol, we had just printed said checklist less than a year before, in the **DEADMAN** Deluxe Bazaar reprint series. Yeah, I read and re-read the original stories in their **ORIGINAL** form, back in the pages of **STRANGE ADVENTURES**. So instead of seeing checklists taking up the bottom half of those half-page story pages that were so common during the **DC** Sixties, I was perusing advertisements for now defunct amusement parks and Tootsie Rolls.

My mistake. But to regret that list now would seem redundant. Instead, I've decided to let you readers determine which stories will continue to fit into the **DEADMAN** continuity and which won't.

That being said, I'd like to take the time to mention that, after going over the body of **DEADMAN** stories that **DC** has done over the years, I was pleasantly surprised to discover that the level of quality, in both story and art department, remained consistently high. Few characters have been treated so well, and have had the honor of being depicted by so many stellar comic talents. Jack Kirby, Neal Adams, Jose Luis Garcia Lopez, Jim Aparo, Carmine Infantino, Len Wein, Bob Kanigher, Jack Miller, and many, many others -- all contributed to the legend, and all did it with the style and wit that would make Boston Brand -- and comic book readers everywhere -- proud.

And truth to tell, that's the main reason why you won't be seeing a **DEADMAN** checklist here. People have a tendency to judge a story on strange criteria sometimes. It doesn't matter how good the story is, or how effectively the characters are portrayed -- what matters, ultimately, is whether or not the story fits into continuity. When I was a kid, some of my favorite **SUPERMAN** stories were the "Imaginary" ones -- the ones where **SUPERMAN** would make a giant leap out of the boundaries of his "legend," and into worlds and situations I thought I would never see -- and when the story was done, it never seemed to matter whether it was "Real" or not. It should be that way here too. I have far too much respect for the writers and artists who have contributed to the **DEADMAN** legend to discount their work with some

grand sweeping gesture. I don't think you should either.

Instead, I'd like to see someone tackle the job of making **ALL** the **DEADMAN** stories **FIT** into the character's history. There's a lot of story gaps within **DEADMAN**'s initial run in **STRANGE ADVENTURES** -- I can't help feeling that there's **SOME** logical way in which to make all the stories **FIT**, instead of discarding the ones that, on their face, don't. Because of the death of Cleveland and Vashua, and the demise of Rama Kushna and Nanda Parbat, most of the stories would have to fit in **BEFORE** the close of this issue's story. The later stories which did **NOT** feature any of these characters could easily fit in **AFTER** the events of this mini-series.

Now, that's a challenge. I grant you, certainly one for a greater mind than the only one I have handy -- mine. But it's a **REAL** challenge. If we **DO** get the chance to do another **DEADMAN** mini-series (and if you're a fan, I'm sure **YOU'LL** find out about five minutes after **WE** do, we'll print the continuity time-line up **THAT** first issue letter column. That way, at least, some of the earlier **DEADMAN** stories won't become "forgotten classics", instead, they'll continue to be appreciated by everyone.

Finally, on a different note, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank a couple of people. Janice Rice, **DEADMAN**'s first editor, who helped me understand the character and his story. Richard Bruning, for taking the Editor's ball and running with it. Tom Zuko, for coloring the series with taste and imagination. Gaspar Saladino, for revising and updating the **DEADMAN** logo, making it cooler and creepier than ever. John Costanza, for fitting all these words into as small a space as possible, and finally, Jose Luis Garcia Lopez, for making the pictures in my head magically appear on paper better than I ever envisioned them -- and for being a friend besides. All now enter the ranks of talent that has worked on Boston Brand's story, in my opinion, they rate with the best.

That's all I've got to say for now, except -- if I haven't already said it -- Thanks for reading.

-ANDY HEIFER



THE LAST DAYS OF THE JSA



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ONE!



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NOT IN YOUR HAND.

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THE DEVIL'S PARTNER!